



# Safely Home – Families First





# Safely Home – Families First

- Mission: The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) protects children from abuse and neglect. DCS does this by partnering with families and communities to provide safe, nurturing, and stable homes
- Vision: Children thrive in safe, caring, supportive communities and families



# Safely Home – Families First

## DCS Values:

- We believe every child has the right to be free from abuse and neglect.
- We believe every child has the right to appropriate care and a permanent home.
- We believe parents have the primary responsibility for the care and safety of their children.
- We believe the most desirable place for children to grow up is with their own families, when these families are able to provide safe, nurturing and stable homes.



# Safely Home, Families First

## What is Safely Home – Families First?

- Renewed and heightened effort to keep kids safely at home or with appropriate relatives
- Natural evolution of the DCS Practice Model:
  - Provide for the well-being of our children;
  - Identify those protective factors that will help keep a child at home safely;
  - Help family members find resources and their own informal supports; and
  - Quickly locate relatives in the event a child is not able to remain in the home.



# Safely Home, Families First

What is Safely Home, Families First?  
(cont).

Our Goal:

1. Children are safely home with resources available and in place to support the family; or
2. They are with appropriate relatives who can lessen the effects of removal and increase their likelihood of achieving the permanency they deserve.



# Safely Home – Families First

## Why Safely Home – Families First?

- DCS mission is to protect children from abuse and neglect: currently
  - 14,102 CHINS cases
  - 9,921 in out-of-home care
  - 5,235 in foster care
  - 3,507 in relative care
  - 967 in residential placements
  - 223 in other placements



# Safely Home – Families First

## Why Safely Home – Families First? (cont.)

- Research shows children do better when they remain in their home or have connection with relatives.
- Younger children who enter care experience more physical, mental and educational challenges than children remaining in their own home.
- Studies demonstrate that children thrive in the least-restrictive, most home like setting.
- Community-based interventions provide a more appropriate alternative to placing children in residential facilities.



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## Why Safely Home – Families First? (cont.)

- Comparing national relative placement versus foster care statistics:
  - More children were with the same placement for one year (82% vs. 65%)
  - Fewer children changed schools (63% vs. 80%, with that number increasing to 93% for group care)
  - More children liked those with whom they lived (93% vs. 79%, 51%)
  - More children wanted their current placement to be their permanent home (61% vs. 27%, 2%)
  - More children felt they “were always loved” (94% vs. 82%)





# Safely Home – Families First

What does Safely Home – Families First look like?

- Utilizing the Practice Model DCS staff partner with families and the community to achieve positive outcomes for the children and families in care
- Family Case Managers (FCMs) team with families to establish a relationship focused on addressing the issues that brought DCS in the family's life
- FCMs then engage the family to help them determine their strengths and needs
- Comprehensive assessment tools are used to determine the safety of the child on an on-going basis throughout the life of the case



## What does Safely Home – Families First look like? (cont.)

- FCMs plan to address the concerns raised and work with the team to determine how those concerns will be addressed
- If at any time the child is unable to remain at home, the FCMs will intervene and the team will work together to locate appropriate relatives
- Case closure is achieved when all parties agree the child's on-going safety, well-being and permanency can be met without further involvement by DCS



# Safely Home

- How SHFF Looks to Families

FCMs draw on the DCS Practice Model skills to help families develop Protective Factors:

- Nurturing and Attachment Conditions
- Knowledge of Parenting Skills and Youth Development
- Family Resilience
- Social Connections
- Concrete Supports



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What does Safely Home – Families First look like?

Current DCS Initiatives in Place to Support Staff

- Child and Adolescent Strength and Needs (CANS)
- Integrated Services Pilot (ISP)
- Northern Indiana Team CHoices (NITCH)
- Wraparound, Systems of Care, Cross Systems of Care and CA-PRTF
- HomeBuilders
- Crisis Intervention
- Medicaid Rehab Option



# **Safely Home – Families First**

## **Questions?**